

# NEWS *from* Port Jervis

## SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Capital Projects referendum addresses urgent school building repairs, safety

**Port Jervis City School District residents will go to the polls on Tuesday, Dec. 12 to consider a Capital Projects referendum**

that would fund \$14,600,000 in renovation projects to address the most urgent infrastructure and safety needs in all of our schools.

The referendum would pay for 45 projects the Building and Grounds Committee selected as the district's top priority needs based on staff and community input, building walk-throughs, and a building condition survey.

Major projects include the replacement of deteriorating roofs at Hamilton-Bicentennial Elementary School, Anna S. Kuhl Elementary School, and Port Jervis High School; renovations to the Middle School and High School auditoriums, High School library and High School science technology laboratories; and the installation of safety and communications systems at all four schools.

If approved, some of the projects would be completed this summer. All other projects would be completed by the summer of 2008.

### No new cost to taxpayers

The proposed capital projects will not increase taxes. State Building Aid and the new EXCEL (Expanding our Children's Education and Learning) State Aid program will fund the project expenditures. As a precaution, the district allocated \$500,000 from its Capital Reserve Fund to address any unforeseen, unaidable construction costs.

### Providing a quality learning environment

"The availability of the additional state aid has provided us with a unique window of opportunity to address the needs of our aging school buildings at no cost to our district," says Superintendent John Xanthis.

Noting that the future availability of the EXCEL Aid program is uncertain, Xanthis said, "This may be the only time we will be

able to undertake projects of this magnitude without impacting taxes."

Xanthis notes that the district took a very conservative approach to the bond to keep costs down. He said, "We only included projects that would be covered totally by state aid."

**2** What school projects would be included in the referendum?

**3** Proposed bond would NOT increase taxes

**4** Voter information

Visit Port Jervis schools on the Web: [pjschools.org](http://pjschools.org)

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**Remember**  
to **VOTE**

**Tuesday, December 12**

Polls Open  
Noon to 9 p.m.

### Polling Locations

Election District #1  
Huguenot Fire House

Election District #2  
Deerpark Municipal Building 2

Election District #3  
Sparrowbush Fire House

Election District #4  
Port Jervis Middle School

If you are not sure where to vote, call the District Clerk at 858-3175.



*Deteriorating school roofs, cracked sidewalks, and leaky pipes are some of the needed building repairs and upgrades that would be addressed in the proposed Capital Projects referendum.*

# What would the referendum cover?

**This proposal calls for \$14.6 million in infrastructure improvements in order to ensure that the schools will remain safe, healthy places for our students.**

Over the years, the district has performed regular maintenance on all of its schools. But, due to the age of the buildings, the roofing, heating/air conditioning, flooring, and other systems are wearing out and becoming costly to repair.

Renovations are also required to enhance school security and to put buildings in compliance with ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) regulations.

“These projects are needed to protect the integrity of our buildings,” says Superintendent John Xanthis. “When your roof is past its useful life, you invest in a new one to protect everything else in your home. With the availability of EXCEL aid, the district wants to do the same for our schools.”

## Project Highlights

### High School

**Library** - Current library was built to meet 1960’s educational standards. Relocating the library to the first floor would create additional student work space; provide easier access for students and community; and create the appropriate environment needed to support tougher graduation requirements.

**Auditorium** - Restoration would provide all district students and their families with a refurbished, air conditioned facility in which to enjoy plays, concerts and other programs.

**Roof** - Sections of the current roof have deteriorated, 45,000 sq. foot of exiting roof needs to be replaced.

**Building Exterior** - Repair broken sidewalks and building canopy, and replace electronic sign.



*Buckets are used to stop rain water from dripping on floors of the cafeteria and several classrooms at Hamilton Bicentennial Elementary School. The proposed Capital Projects referendum would replace deteriorating roofs at both elementary schools and the High School.*



*Many of the seats in the High School auditorium are broken, limiting the availability of seating for High School musicals, band performances, and district-wide school concerts. Auditorium restorations are part of the proposed capital projects referendum.*

### Science & Technology Labs -

Today’s science classes need to be properly equipped to provide students with the skills needed to excel on the challenging Regents exams. Renovations would make the labs highly functional and more effective learning space.

**Cafeteria** - Replacement windows, new paint, and other work is needed to give students a quality cafeteria.

### Middle School

**Cafeteria** - Renovations are needed to fix broken floor and ceiling tiles and leaky pipes.

**Auditorium** - Stage repair and renovation work would include installation of lift for wheel chair accessibility.

**Gymnasium** - Replacing or resurfacing of gym floor.

**Building Systems** - To ensure safety, building needs to be equipped with fire stopping devices and closed circuit TV.

### In short...

#### Proposed Projects High School

- Roof replacement (45,000 sq. ft.)
- Repair concrete sidewalks/canopy
- Replace electronic sign
- Relocate library and upgrade space
- Install fencing around transformer
- Replace windows - cafeteria & stairwell
- Air conditioning - auditorium, library, cafeteria
- Replace fire alarm system
- Install closed circuit TV, keyless entry, intercom
- Renovate cafeteria, entrance corridors, auditorium, technology/science labs, lockers
- Provide two handicapped accessible restrooms
- Remove underground oil tank

## The high cost of doing nothing...

Regardless of the outcome of the Dec. 12 referendum, the needed school building repairs are not going away.

Roofs are leaking, heating and air conditioning systems are failing, and building security needs are increasing.

“Our options are this: We can address the needs now using state funding or we can piece-meal the work over time,” says Assistant Superintendent for Business Lorelei Case.

“If we don’t take care of the problems now, we will have to fund projects - such as costly roof repairs - out of our operating budget at full cost to taxpayers.”

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## What’s in store for our elementary schools?

### Anna S. Kuhl Elementary School

**Library** - Renovations will include technology enhancements and carpet replacement.

**Gymnasium** - Improve facility by installing new lighting and upgrading sound system.

**Building systems** - Improve building safety and security by replacing outdated public address/clock/bell system and installing new closed circuit televisions and fire alarm.

**Roofing** - Replace deteriorating sections of roof.

*Temporary fixes to the piping in the Middle School Cafeteria and other worn-out school equipment need to be addressed. EXCEL aid would allow the district to finance needed building repairs at no cost to local tax payers.*

## Proposed \$14.6 million bond will NOT increase school taxes

### Extra state funding to pay for projects

District officials worked with State Education Department facilities planning staff, engineers, financial consultants, and construction managers to develop projects that would be aided by State Building Aid and EXCEL Aid, a new category of aid intended to cover the cost of certain repairs and improvements.

As a result, the district now has the means of funding needed building repairs and renovations without passing the project costs on to taxpayers.

While state aid will cover the project costs, the district is asking voters to approve the allocation of money from its Capital Reserve to address any unforeseen, unaidable construction expenses that may arise when work begins.

#### Funding is projected at:

\$11,602,000	State Building Aid
2,498,000	EXCEL Aid
500,000	Capital Reserve

### Hamilton Bicentennial Elementary School

**New Entrance** - Improve building security by adding a new vestibule to provide better monitoring of front entrance.

**Roof replacement** - Eliminate leaky roofs by replacing 63,981 sq. feet of deteriorating roofing.

#### Heating/Air conditioning -

Improve heating by adding third boiler. Replace air conditioning in library and cafeteria, and install unit in computer lab.

**Interior** - Replace building carpeting and flooring.

**Safety** - Replace outdated fire alarm and intercom systems, and install closed circuit

cameras on school grounds.



#### In short...

#### Proposed Projects Middle School

- Renovate auditorium
- Refurbish gymnasium flooring
- Cafeteria renovations
- Make auditorium stage handicapped accessible
- Remove underground oil tank

#### ASK Elementary School

- Replace 27,000 sq. feet of roofing
- Replace library carpeting
- Install new lighting & sound system in gymnasium
- Replace public address system/clock/bell system
- Replace windows in E-2 wing
- Install closed circuit TV, keyless entry, intercom
- Renovate entrance canopy
- Provide two handicapped accessible restrooms



**In short...**

**Proposed Projects  
Hamilton  
Bicentennial  
Elementary  
School**

- Replace 63,981 sq. feet of roofing
- Add new entrance vestibule
- Remove underground oil tank
- Replace sewage line
- Add third boiler
- Install closed circuit TV, keyless entry, intercom
- Air conditioning - Replace cafeteria & library units, install new unit in computer room
- Replace building carpeting and flooring

**District Sewage Plant**

- Upgrade and make needed repairs

## Who may vote?

You may vote if you are a U.S. citizen, 18 years of age or older, have been a district resident for at least 30 days prior to the vote, and are registered with either the school district or the county Board of Elections.

## Voting by absentee ballot?

Absentee ballots are available if you are unable to vote in person because you are ill, plan to be away on vacation or business, are confined to prison due to conviction of an offense other than a felony, or are accompanying a spouse, parent, or child of the same residence who can't come to the polls for one of the above reasons.

You can obtain an absentee ballot by calling District Clerk Michele O'Donnell at 858-3175. Absentee ballots must reach the District Clerk Office's no later than 5 p.m. on Dec. 12.

## Sign up to receive e-mail alerts

Port Jervis is pleased to announce the launch of its new "School News Notifier" (SNN), a system designed to help keep parents and the community more in touch with what is happening in the Port Jervis Schools.

SNN is an opt-in email alert system where parents and residents can sign up to receive e-mail alerts from different schools or the superintendent.



Presently, the district is offering the following alerts:

- Emergency school closings, early dismissals and delays
- District News
- School Building News

To sign up, visit our Web site:  
<http://www.pjschools.org>

## Need more information?

■ Visit the district's new Web site:  
<http://www.pjschools.org>

for more information about the proposed projects included in the Dec. 12 referendum, including:

- Frequently asked questions
- Voter information
- How to sign-up to receive electronic notifications about the bond

■ Attend one of the following remaining informational meetings

**Thursday, Dec. 7**

**Deerpark Town Hall**

7 p.m.

**Saturday, Dec. 9**

**West End Fire House #5**

10 a.m.

**Deerpark Town Hall**

Noon

**Sparrowbush Methodist Church**

Noon



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PORT JERVIS CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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